

BANDERSNATCH

The Newsletter of The Lewis Carroll Society

From The Editor

Carrollians continue. There have been talks and presentations throughout the year. There is also the revival of a Netherlands chapter of the Lewis Carroll Society. There is also an article from Catherine Collingwood, the great-great niece of Charles Dodgson in this edition.

Don't forget The Christmas Party!

Lewis Carroll Society Meetings

Friday 14 October

Paul Rissmann and Kiera Vaclavik –

The Alice Sound: the wonders of Paul Rissmann's Wonderland Suite

Friday 18 November

Annual General Meeting at 6.30 pm (LCS Members Only)

Followed at 7:00 pm by

Brian Sibley and David Weeks –

"It's Wrong From Beginning to End": Lewis Carroll & the Poetry of Parody

Saturday 17 December

The Lewis Carroll Society Christmas Party

All events held at The Art Workers' Guild, 6 Queen Square, London, WC1N 3AT at 6:30 for 7:00 pm. Meetings on 14 October and 18 November will be held in The Gradidge Room (First Floor) and the Christmas Party in the Main Hall

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Friday 14 October

The Art Workers' Guild in The Gradidge Room (First Floor), 6:30 for 7:00 pm

The Alice Sound: the wonders of Paul Rissmann's Wonderland Suite

Composer Paul Rissmann and Carroll scholar Dr Kiera Vaclavik (QMUL) present the creative process behind the Wonderland Suite, which was premiered by the London Symphony Orchestra at the Barbican to sell-out crowds in November 2015. The work took as its point of departure Victorian parlour music based on the "Alice" books, and the session will provide a very brief history of musical engagement with Carroll's work. The speakers will also explore the fascinating soundscape of Wonderland. Best of all, there will be opportunities to listen to key parts of the new work, with commentary by the composer.

Friday 18 November

The Art Workers' Guild in The Gradidge Room (First Floor), 6:30 for 7:00 pm

Annual General Meeting at 6:30 pm (LCS Members Only)

Followed at 7:00 pm by ***"It's Wrong From Beginning to End": Lewis Carroll & the Poetry of Parody***

Brian Sibley and David Weeks present the literary parodies of Lewis Carroll, showing the influence of Isaac Watts and other writers of moral and improving texts on Dodgson who lampooned them, first in juvenile writings such as "Useful and Instructive Poetry" and, later, in the pages of "Wonderland" and "Looking-Glass" with the result that the parodies have outlived the originals!

Saturday 17 December

The Art Workers' Guild in The Main Hall, 6:30 for 7:00 pm

Lewis Carroll Christmas Party

An evening of feasting and fun set around the theme of Looking-Glass chess. There will be plenty to eat and drink, entertainments, quizzes and raffles. The wearing of party costumes is optional – but there will be prizes!

Tickets: £12 Members, £15 Guests. Reserve tickets **now** with Treasurer, Bob Cole
Tel: 020 7033 1949 or by email: bobcolee2@hotmail.com

Events and Activities in 2016

Alice in Wonderland Exhibition

Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle, until 2 October 2016

A British Library exhibition with additional loans from the Victoria & Albert Museum especially for the Laing, Alice in Wonderland delves into the world of Lewis Carroll's classic tale, Alice's Adventures in Wonderland. The exhibition includes illustrations and drawings celebrating Alice in Wonderland by Mervyn Peake, Ralph Steadman, Leonard Weisgard, Arthur Rackham, Peter Blake and Salvador Dali.

Talk: 'Peter Pan Collars and Alice Bands – The Sartorial Afterlife of British Children's Classics'

20 October 2016, 6:00 pm in Florence Nightingale Museum
2 Lambeth Palace Road, London, SE1 7EW

A public lecture by Professor Kiera Vaclavik, author of *Uncharted Depths* (Legenda 2010) and curator of The Alice Look exhibition (V&A Museum of Childhood 2015). The talk coincides with the Peter Pan exhibition currently at the Nightingale Museum.

Talk: 'Fantastic Maps from Winnie-the-Pooh to Game of Thrones'

10 November 2016, 7:00-8:30 pm in The British Library Lecture Theatre
96 Euston Road, London NW1 2DB

An evening event to coincide with the forthcoming British Library exhibition: "Maps and the 20th Century: Drawing the Line" (4 November 2016 - 1 March 2017), an illustrated talk by Brian Sibley exploring the tradition of mapping fictional landscapes and its proliferation in the last century, followed by guest speakers.

Check The British Library website for details and tickets: <https://www.bl.uk/events>

Talk: Charles van Sandwyk's Folio Alice

The Folio Society and Waterstone's Piccadilly (203, Piccadilly, London, W1) are planning an evening event celebrating Folio's 'Alice 150' edition of Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, illustrated by Canadian artist Charles van Sandwyk and published earlier this year. The illustrator will be in conversation with Brian Sibley. Check Waterstone's website for timings and ticket details.

Music: Gerald Barry: Alice's Adventures under Ground

28 November 2016 at 7:30 pm, Barbican Hall, London

Barbara Hannigan sings the role of Alice – and if you saw her in Barry's "The Importance of Being Earnest", you definitely won't want to miss her in this: Barry's described it as 'the next logical step'. "The Daily Telegraph", meanwhile, described Barry's last opera as 'completely bonkers' – which is probably nearer the mark.

British Association of Victorian Studies (BAVS) Conference – "Consuming (the) Victorians"

The British Association for Victorian Studies (BAVS) is an organisation dedicated to the advancement and dissemination of knowledge about the Victorian period. It has over 600 members based in the UK and beyond, and drawn both from the academic community and the general public. It covers a wide range of interests in the nineteenth century, including art history, cultural studies, history, literary studies, performance studies and the history of science. This year's conference was hosted by Cardiff University (31 August-2 September, 2016)

There were a number of papers during the conference that had themes that directly addressed Carrollian themes. These included the following:

- "Wide-eyed Dorothea in Wonderland: Consuming George Eliot's curiously mathematical images" by Derek Ball
- "Lewis Carroll as consumer and producer" by Stephen Folan
- "Consuming the supernatural: Dream-worlds, hyperspace and the evolution of modern fantasy in Kingsley, Carroll and MacDonald" by Kirstin Mills

- “Entropy of mind: Psychology and the realistic wonderlands of the fin-de-siècle fantasies of George MacDonald and Lewis Carroll” by Franziska Kohlt

Alice at the Edinburgh Festival 2016

From **Sarah Stanfield**

This year’s programme for the Edinburgh Festival had no less than 8 shows dedicated to Alice, ranging from traditional portrayals of the Wonderland and Looking Glass stories to (as you would expect) the wild and surreal. There is also “Alice: The Musical” by the California Musical Theatre Ensemble, “Alice in Wasteland” – a contemporary twist on Wonderland by Pyratrix Circus, “Alice and the Dreamchild” by Transforum Theatre, “Alice Unhinged” by Young Pleasance and “Alix in Wundergarten” by Difficultstage and The Other Room.

Did any members get to visit the Festival and see any of these productions? It would be good to read reviews.

Revival of The Dutch Lewis Carroll Society

From **Bas Savenije** and **Casper Schuckink Kool**

Since 1976, there has been a Dutch Lewis Carroll Society, named “Lewis Carroll Genootschap” (LCG). During the past 30 years, however, this society remained dormant, without any activities.

Two Dutch Carrollians, we have initiated a revival of the society with mission of promoting contacts, primarily (but not exclusively) in The Netherlands and the Flanders area, between individuals and organisations, interested in the life and work of Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, better known as Lewis Carroll. The LCG aims at providing a platform for everyone concerned with Lewis Carroll by distributing publications (whether print or on-line), exchanging information with sister-societies in the UK and the USA, organising exhibitions and presentations, publishing a newsletter, maintaining a website and convening a festive annual event.

Starting with a website (www.lewiscarrollgenootschap.nl, in Dutch), we are now trying to get in touch with others in the Dutch speaking region who are interested in

Lewis Carroll. Since we aim to extend the activities outside this region, publications and other forms of communication will be in Dutch and English. An English version of the website will become available.

When there is sufficient interest, a festive revival meeting will be organised, with an attractive program and ample opportunity to discuss the society's plans. If you wish to be informed about the plans and the revival meeting. Please make yourself known to the following address: info@lewiscarrollgenootschap.nl.

Unconventional, Peculiar yet Exceptionally Gifted

From **Catherine Collingwood**, great-great niece of Charles Dodgson

As the 150th anniversary celebrations of the publication of "Alice in Wonderland" occur, there were countless articles on Lewis Carroll and theories of whether he was a weirdo or a genius. Without doubt we are wasting our time, hypothesizing and analysing his character, when we should just rejoice in reading his stories.

This is my great-great Uncle, Charles Lutwidge Dodgson. My Grandfather, Stuart Dodgson Collingwood was his nephew and wrote the first biography of Lewis Carroll.

My father, who also inherited the Dodgson name and his family, were quietly thrilled and also rather fascinated to be part of this remarkable and rather unconventional man's ancestry with his mathematical mind and tumbling, lyrical tales. My father, in fact had to dress up in his best sailor suit and present a bouquet of flowers to Alice Liddell. Unfortunately we don't have a photograph but he told us his knees were knocking as he passed the bouquet to an elderly Alice.

With such an incredibly famous relative to flaunt I may have boasted somewhat in school and flattered myself thinking maybe some of his creative talents in story telling had rubbed off on me. In fact they had not. I was quite average at creative writing but I did have an extraordinary relative. Is it possible he may have handed something down to me, however small?

As I got older, I realized what enormous and continuing impact "Alice" has on children and adults alike. There are droves of people honestly obsessed with the characters and rhymes in the book and possibly in the idea of a Wonderland existing.

It is a most delightful situation Alice finds herself in, which never rights itself within reason until she awakes and wonders if she has been dreaming. We all know she most probably has been asleep, but it is a treat to believe Wonderland exists. How refreshing to be part of a slightly topsy-turvy world where nothing is how it should be and our minds are challenged left, right and centre. Dodgson's capacity to evoke imagery through language was impressive and if one read "Alice and Wonderland" without illustrations, the colourful writing itself would conjure up exactly how the Cheshire Cat grinned and how the hatter positioned his hat on a certain slant.

When we find his father was a great supporter of Anglo-Catholicism and a clergyman of the Anglican Church, we can see he had a strict upbringing with strong morals. At Oxford, he earned his BA with a 1st in Mathematics and 2nd in Classics and, even though he didn't take holy orders, he remained a deacon of Christ Church, showing he had a strong faith.

He used his impeccably logical mind to explore religious idealism, arguing if God is love and eternally good, how could he inflict eternal punishment on man. He was perhaps a tortured soul, and through his upbringing in a seriously religious setting, it clashed with his genuine experience of the spiritual world. Dodgson loved nonsense but was also devout and thought the two should never mix, thus there are no nonsensical references to religion in his stories.

When Dodgson befriended a family in Oxford with three girls and a boy, he entertained them with his distinctive jokes and stories. This is where and when he met Alice who became his favourite child.

On taking up photography, he intended to combine the ideals of freedom and beauty into the innocence of Eden, where the human form was not an object of shame. He wanted to show beauty as a state of Grace and a way of retrieving lost innocence. He took many pictures of children but also many other subjects including adults.

Dodgson openly declared that he adored Alice, that she was a 'perfect' child, and he was happy to be in children's company, finding it easier to chat and amuse them with his tales and, in doing so, it is said that his normal tendency to stammer disappeared completely. Alice recalled Dodgson as a fairy godfather who was a fountain of wondrous stories.

He was genuinely enthralled with children and the glory of innocence.

‘Who in the world am I? Ah, that’s the great puzzle’ says Alice.

Alice herself wonders who she is and inside Wonderland she is thrown up against many interesting and inexplicable experiences that will shape her character. Similarly in the real world, we all have opportunities to become something unique and not ‘follow the crowd’.

Finally I realise THIS is what I inherited: neither the cleverness or the story telling abilities nor the mathematical logic but to be gratified with being unconventional and not quite fitting in and knowing that it suits me rather well.

Yes Charles Dodgson was unusual, partly peculiar perhaps, but definitely magnificent in his capacity to enthrall children and adults worldwide with his fantastical stories of endless rabbit tunnels and peering through curious looking-glasses.

As the Cheshire Cat said to Alice: ‘We’re all mad here. I’m mad. You’re mad.’ A pinch of mild madness in the world is a marvellous thing.

Lewis Carroll’s Long Running Puzzle

From Neil Bant

What riddle takes 150 years to solve? If you know the story of “Alice in Wonderland” you will be familiar with the Hatter’s riddle: “Why is a raven like a writing desk?” Lewis Carroll drew inspiration for the White Rabbit from St. Mary’s Church in Beverley, Yorkshire. Beverley may soon have another connection with Carroll, if Neil Bant has correctly solved the riddle after 150 years.

It is known that Lewis Carroll gave an answer to this riddle in later editions of Alice in Wonderland but could Lewis Carroll’s answer have been another riddle in itself?

He published the answer as ‘Because it can produce a few notes, though they are very flat; and it is never put with the wrong end in front.’

It was only realised recently that he had intentionally spelt ‘never’ incorrectly, but the publishers corrected the misspelling. ‘Never’ is ‘raven’ back to front. It has

troubled people that the second part of his explanation (and it is 'nevar' put with the wrong end in front) does not fit both a raven and a writing desk.

Neil thinks that this could be *another* riddle and I may have just solved the riddle that was first set by Lewis Carroll in 1865. My answer to the riddle seems obvious when spoken:

'One is nevar backwards and the other is forwards.'

The misspelling of 'forwards' as 'for words' fits the saying for both the raven and the writing desk.

Other authors have come up with answers like both have inky quills, but my simple line to solve the riddle fits with the "Alice" story itself. Whilst Alice is moving forward in time, the characters in "Wonderland" and "Through the Looking-Glass" are moving backwards in time.

It would be interesting to see if other Carrollians have any other suggestions?



Reviews of Events & Exhibitions

‘Inspired by Alice’ Day and ‘Get Your Thinking Caps On’ Competition

7 August 2016, Guildford

From **Brian Smith**

Guildford Castle was a great setting for this family fun day. The grounds were full of sun-drenched picnickers enjoying all sorts of things ‘inspired by Alice’. There were readings from “Wonderland”, live music, stalls, refreshments, craft activities, the invitation to dress up as a Carrollian character and ample opportunity to explore the castle’s lovely surroundings. Those seeking high levels of contention could pick up a flamingo and join the throng on the croquet lawn or go seek out the Jabberwock in his lair. And it was on these very downs that Lewis Carroll considered the nature of the Snark.

Fortunately for those playing croquet, Guildford’s own ‘Red King’ (Matthew Alexander) was on hand to give kindly advice and keep order (where possible).

The Keep was the setting for a Tea-party for a very select group of young designers. They had all taken part in a competition to come up with new headgear for Alice, the Hatter, the White Rabbit or the Dormouse. The design was to be eye-catching, of course, but might also be of unique assistance to its wearer (for example, something to help the White Rabbit to be on time or the Dormouse to stay awake).

Congratulations to all those who sent in designs (not just the winners). The judges had a difficult job considering their verdicts. The highly imaginative entries included a White Rabbit’s hat that changed the motion of the planets, slowing down time itself to suit the wearer’s temporal disposition; an Alice-band able to glow in the dark and make everyone in the vicinity happy; and a truly surreal stove-pipe hat for the Hatter that incorporated an enormous pocket-watch on its face, thereby reminding everyone it was time to move round one place. After tea, Mayor Gordon Jackson presented certificates to the winners.



Meanwhile, in the grounds, the picnicking and croquet continued apace.

Many thanks go to Guildford Borough and Guildford Museum for organising this free event (although you did have to be a design winner to get into the tea party) – especially Jill Draper (Heritage Manager) and Lynn Szygenda (Exhibitions and Audience Development Officer) for their energy and inspiration in organizing such a popular and enjoyable occasion.

It was full of imaginative fun and Lewis Carroll would have felt right at home.

(**Editor:** Thanks are also due to Brian Smith for being one of the judges and representing The Lewis Carroll Society at the event.)

Review: C. L. D. The Real Lewis Carroll

16 July 2016, St Columba's Church Hall, Oxford

From **Mark Davis**

Let me preface this review by saying that I don't get out much. Therefore, simply because of the novelty of the occasion, of witnessing some rare live entertainment, there were certain to be aspects of this show that would appeal to me – as indeed proved to be the case.

All the cast gave very assured performances; the words, whether spoken or sung, were generally clear (albeit occasionally overpowered by the musical accompaniment), and I liked the unusual way that the stage and audience were both ranged parallel to the long axis of the hall, rather than the more conventional arrangement of seats in rows facing a stage at one end. It made for an enlivening

occasion, because of the appearance of characters from both right and left, and the proximity this allowed to the performers.

As the name suggests, Charles Lutwidge Dodgson is the focus of the piece. Or rather, Lewis Carroll is. Or rather, they both are, because the clever conceit – what makes this so much more thought provoking than a few song-and-dance routines based on the life a complex polymath is that two different actors, Peter Watts and Stewart Briggs, portray Carroll and Dodgson respectively as two strikingly different individuals.

Dodgson is the character beloved and perpetuated by his contemporary relations and early biographers: shy, hesitant, meticulous and unworldly. Carroll, meanwhile (described oddly as Dodgson's 'muse'), is quite the opposite: an extrovert, knowing, pushy, risk-taking man-of-the-world. This duality produces moments of anguish, of drama, and often of humour – for instance when Carroll (who is of course immortal) shows Dodgson (who of course died in 1898) how his passion of photography has evolved in the digital age.

I also liked some of the merging of aspects of Dodgson's life with recognisable scenes and expressions from Wonderland. One of the best was the transposition of the Trial of the Knave of Hearts to the Christ Church electors debating the unprecedented step of allowing Dodgson to postpone taking holy orders.

So far so good. Using two different actors was an engaging way of showing the two sides of the man, but it won't be a way that is to every Carrollian's taste, since the plot hinges on a love affair between Dodgson and Lorina Liddell – no, not Alice's older sister, on this occasion, but her mother, played with convincing authority by Emily-Louise Tomlins. And still more iconoclastically the plot gives us Carroll as the father of Violet Liddell, who was born in March 1864.

Whether this makes you grin, with a Carroll-like, laddish "good on yer, mate", or recoil in horror, in concert with the prim and proper Dodgson, will ultimately decide whether you like this show. The idea is not impossible – truth is often stranger than fiction, and the truth about fiction-writers is often very much stranger than the fiction they write – but does somewhat manipulate the available evidence to suit the thesis. As indeed, in my opinion, does Karoline Leach's otherwise extremely well

researched and plausible “In the Shadow of the Dreamchild”, this being, as the writers, Jane Bramwell and Michael Brand, acknowledge in their programme, ‘a book to which we are indebted’.

Indeed, to my mind (which is inside the head of an Oxford local historian, tediously pointing out the mundane realities which refute some of the more colourful Alicean myths which have originated around certain Oxford people and places), the very idea of such a tryst between Dodgson and Mrs Liddell is weakened by the inventions which the unwary might take as fact.

A diary entry of 10 June 1862 particularly worried me, purporting to be a ‘row on the river with the children’ (and Duckworth) on a ‘golden afternoon’ (a row with oars, that is). And ‘the huge row at a family picnic at Nuneham’ is stated with certainty to have occurred (a row with raised voices, that is).

Certainly the way that Henry Liddell was portrayed (by Allan Scott-Douglas), as aloof and overbearing, much fonder of Arthur Stanley than of his wife and children, one could imagine rows aplenty, but suppositions like this, allied to other small slips, such as the frequent repetition of “Mad Hatter” and “Christ Church College” (it should be just Christ Church, don’t-cha-know) undermined my overall appreciation.

Whether this reflected the feelings of the audience in general is hard to say, but the spontaneous applause after the whole cast (of nine) danced a spirited ‘Lobster Quadrille’ at the end of Act One showed that many were warming to the occasion, and certainly there were no ‘off with her head’ moments at question-and-answer session with Jane Bramwell after the show.

Alice’s Day: 2nd July 2016

The whole of Oxford town centre was buzzing with Alice-based activities and there were people walking around in fancy dress costume. The White Rabbit in Blackwell’s bookshop and the Red Queen walking around town were great to see. There were street performances, lobster quadrilles, art exhibitions and shadow puppets.

The LCS contributed by arranging two talks at the Story Museum that were well attended, very different and both interesting.

LCS Talk: 'Wonderland Creatures and Looking-Glass Beasts' by John Vernon Lord

Alice's Day, 2016, The Story Museum, Oxford

From **Lindsay Fulcher**

The brilliant artist John Vernon Lord, who has illustrated "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland", "Through the Looking-Glass" and "The Hunting of the Snark", gave an entertaining talk entitled "Wonderland Creatures and Looking Glass Beasts".

Following in the footsteps of Sir John Tenniel, whose work John rated as 'outstanding', is a daunting task for any artist. But he said he was determined 'to escape from Tenniel's vision' and to draw on 'the dream experiences close to Alice's point of view'.

At first John thought he would not depict Alice at all but he later changed his mind and he also decided to print all her dialogue in blue to make it stand out

Reading the book gave him a clear view of the characters. He saw the White Rabbit as bossy, nervous and twitchy; the Mouse as boring; the Dodo as formal and authoritative; the Cheshire Cat as enigmatic; the Gryphon (whom he pointed out in an aside is the symbol of Trinity College) was tetchy and the Sheep was cranky. As for the host and guests at the Mad Tea-party – 'they're all objectionable people!' he declared. These character assessments influenced how he portrayed each one. The Gnat and Bill the Lizard are his favourites 'because,' he explained 'they are melancholic – rather like me'.

John also revealed that he uses real scenes, objects and even animals from his own domestic life in his illustrations: the daisy lawn was in his own garden, the White Rabbit's house was based on his neighbours' and his pet cat Lily was also used as a model.

A soup tureen that appears at Alice's banquet was one he had 'bought in Dieppe some years ago'. Perhaps it is these personal touches that lend a special kind of cosy magic to his delightful illustrations.

LCS Talk: ‘The Diverting History of the Dodo’ by Errol Fuller

Alice’s Day, 2016, The Story Museum, Oxford

From **Stephen Folan**

Errol Fuller gave a fascinating talk on the history of the dodo – a bird that did not live long enough to see itself become a cultural icon for extinction.

Describing the evolution of the bird from pigeon to Dodo, Errol explained that the dodo’s pigeon ancestors landed on Mauritius and found food so plentiful that it did not need to fly. A number of generations later, we had the well-fed, flightless bird. The dodo continued to live its life out on Mauritius until its isolation was interrupted and ended when Dutch sailors landed. Apart from their appetite, the sailors brought new predators such as dogs, cats and rats and these combined factors hastened the end of the dodo.



Descriptions of the flavour of dodo are a bit sparse, but if you were a sailor on poor rations you were less likely to be fussy when this slow-moving feast on two legs presented itself. The more senior officers, however, may have found Dodo bit too greasy and lacking nourishment, a sort of two-legged kebab.

So, about 100 years after its discovery by Portuguese, it was extinct. There are a few pictures of dodos that are

available but none that Errol feels are the definitive dodo picture. Either they are caricatures, incomplete, a small part of a larger picture or a different bird altogether.

Following its extinction, the dodo was more or less forgotten for more than 100 years. Before 1865, Lewis Carroll often visited the Museum accompanied by the young Alice Liddell and her two sisters. The animals they saw there, along with friends, and familiar places around Oxford were incorporated into the stories Carroll created for his young companions.

The dodo was a favourite for Dodgson and, some believe, that Jan Savery's painting of a dodo (above), which hangs in the Museum, was the original inspiration for the character of the dodo in Alice's Adventures in Wonderland. The picture passed to the Natural History Museum along with the only two known dodo remains still partially covered in flesh.

Then, in 1865, Lewis Carroll published "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland". This book contained a memorable exchange between Alice and a dodo (*the Dodo*) whose refrain 'all must have prizes' has entered many a dictionary of quotations. But it was Sir John Tenniel's illustration, based on a 17th-century painting in the Natural History Museum, which really kick-started the dodo industry. There was a lot of interest in what was described as this 'icon of extinction'.

Alas, the physical evidence of the dodo is limited. There are bones that have been found in Mauritius that have been reassembled from many skeletons to create dodo infrastructures and there is a head and a right foot that is stored in Oxford's Ashmolean Museum. As well as casts of the Oxford dodo, there is a 'slim-line' model (based on estimates of how much weight a dodo could support), and a cast of a composite skeleton on display. There are also many fakes – built from wire frames and feathers – that are on display throughout the world.

At the time of Lewis Carroll, extinction at the hand of man was regarded as an unfortunate but inevitable consequence of human superiority over nature (and European superiority over non-European peoples), an attitude based on contemporary religious and social philosophies that led to misinterpretation of Darwin's 'survival of the fittest'.



The talk reminded me of the similar challenge that exists for Lewis Carroll scholars and historians. They look through the texts, letters, diaries and other scraps of information to reconstruct the life of the well-known but not well-understood author. They try to comprehend the motivation and thinking behind the person who is best known for writing two iconic children's stories (although he did many other things). Like the dodo, there is a particular picture of how he is represented and it is used often.

A questioner did ask if would be possible to resurrect the birds using ancient DNA from a dodo, but science cannot do it at present and it will not happen in the near future. Steven Spielberg should consider auditioning the Dodo for a supporting role in the next 'Jurassic Park' film.

Alice in MediaLand: Roald Dahl and “The BFG”

From **Stephen Martin**

This year marks the centenary of the birth of Roald Dahl who was born on 13 September 1916.

There is little doubt that Lewis Carroll’s Alice books were the most popular children’s literature of the 19th century and Roald Dahl was the most phenomenally successful writer of the 20th Century and is still a best seller in the 21st century.

Nearly a hundred years divides the publication of Lewis Carroll’s “Alice in Wonderland” in 1865 with Roald Dahl’s first children’s book, “James and the Giant Peach” in 1961.

Like Charles Dodgson telling Alice Liddell his improvised stories on their trips on the Isis, Dahl began by telling his own children bedtime stories, which were then written down at a later date.

Another interesting aspect is the collaboration between the writer and the illustrator, where the pictures perfectly complement the text: in Lewis Carroll’s case, with Sir John Tenniel, and Dahl with Quentin Blake. ‘What was so nice about Dahl,’ said Blake, ‘was he actually wanted the pictures: he didn’t like it if there weren’t enough.’ There are two exhibitions devoted to the artist’s work: “‘The BFG’ in Pictures’ at the House of Illustration, London (until October 2nd) and ‘Quentin Blake: Inside Stories’ at the National Museum, Cardiff (until Nov 20th).

Gipsy House at Great Missenden in Buckinghamshire was Dahl’s home for over 30 years. At the Roald Dahl Museum and Story Centre (opened in 2005) the shed where he wrote many of his most famous books is on display.

There are several interesting filmic connections. Dahl wrote the screenplay for “Chitty Chitty Bang Bang” (1967) and created the sinister character of the Child Catcher played by Sir Robert Helpmann, the actor and ballet dancer. Helpmann also played the Mad Hatter in the British musical version of “Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland” (1972). Gene Wilder played Willie Wonka in “Willie Wonka and the Chocolate Factory” (1971) and the Mock Turtle in the Hallmark “Alice in

Wonderland" (1999) while Johnny Depp played Willie Wonka in Tim Burton's "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory" (2005) and the Mad Hatter in Burton's "Alice in Wonderland" and "Through the Looking Glass" (2010/2016). Film director, Gavin Millar was responsible for both "Dreamchild" (1984) and "Danny The Champion of the World" (1989).

"The BFG" appeared as a brief tale in "Danny the Champion of the World" (1975). Dahl sent the first draft to Stephen Roxburgh of Farrar, Straus, & Giroux publishing company. Roxburgh was an academic specialist in Victorian children's literature, and he was to become 'an Editors dream' for Dahl. The novel was published in 1982 and was dedicated to his 7-year-old daughter, Olivia, who died from measles encephalitis in 1962. The character of the heroine was based upon Roald's first grandchild, Sophie, and Quentin Blake incorporated her glasses and long, straggly hair with fringe in his drawings.

Dreams are an integral part of the plots of the "Alice" books and, particularly so, in "The BFG". In Dream Country, the BFG's work is to catch vaporous dreams in nets, preserves them in a glass bottles, write down the dream's story on a label stuck to it, and store it on a massive shelf along with thousands of others. At the Witching Hour (3 a.m.) the BFG goes off blowing dreams using his long trumpet-like instrument through the windows of adults and children, and this is how Sophie first sets eyes on him because she is still awake. Unlike Alice, poor Sophie's adventures with the BFG are not a dream but turns out to be a real experience.

In "Through the Looking-Glass", Humpty Dumpty states, 'When I use a word it means just what I choose it to mean – neither more nor less', and Lewis Carroll could change the meaning of a word such as 'portmanteau' a leather travelling case, and to reinvent it as an artificial word combining two distinct words: such as 'chortle' from 'chuckle' and 'snort', 'galumphing' from 'gallop' and 'triumph', 'snark' from 'snail' and 'shark', 'slithy' from 'lithe' and 'slimy'. Dahl invented 'gobble funk', the garbled language of the BFG, and he has a fantastic fun time in creating similar portmanteau words that children love; such as 'glorumpious' and 'jiggryaffes'; the BFG exclaims, 'As I am telling you before, I know exactly what words I am wanting to say but somehow or other they is always getting squiff-squiddled around.'

Please send any comments to Professor Peter Hunt at peterhunt1@hotmail.com

Alice in “The Financial Times”



— Cartoon by Chris Duggan

Alice in wonky land

"HOW nice it would be if we could only get through into Looking-glass House... Let's pretend the glass has got all soft like gauze, so we can get through".

The very rare first printing of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* featured in ATG No 2245 failed to sell at Christie's New York on June 16. However, on the previous day at **Bonhams London** the concave distorting mirror **right**, which, according to an old label, was once the property of Charles Dodgson (Lewis Carroll), made **£4000**.

Whether it has any direct connection with *Alice through the Looking-Glass* is uncertain, but Dodgson is known to have owned such a thing and the label applied by Cecil Halliday, who from 1941-56 had an antiques shop in the High Street, Oxford, offers the association appeal. It notes that this small, wooden-framed mirror was "formerly property of Rev. Dodson of Ch.Ch. [Christ Church] given to Miss Hatch" and it was certainly included in a 1998 centenary exhibition at the college.

An 1879 photograph of Evelyn Hatch, a daughter of the Vice-Principal of St Mary Hall, Oxford, wearing a short, sleeveless dress, sold at £4800. It was a rather faded print but inscribed to her mother by Dodgson and said to be the only known surviving example of what was one of Dodgson's last photographs.



Alice at Fortnum and Mason

From **Christine Garnham**

Earlier this year, ending in July, the famous window displays at Fortnum and Mason's in Piccadilly, London, comprised elements from the film "Alice Through The Looking Glass". Flowers had hand-sculpted faces, rabbit ears peeped out from the flora and the Cheshire Cat's tail wound around a teacup. And an awful lot of tea was on display.

'Fortnum's has a really close relationship with tea,' says store's visual presentation manager, Paul Symes: 'Everyone knows the Mad Hatter's tea-party, so what better combination could you have? It took us six weeks in production time, but things worked out really well.'



Shoppers were able to spot other sights from the film including looking-glasses, oversized chess pieces, butterflies, a giant swinging pendulum and a gargantuan pocket watch.

‘I wanted to create something that was quite eccentric and a celebration of the film,’ said Symes. ‘It was all about taking people through layers of intrigue. There’s nothing better than seeing kids going past the window and saying, “Ah, it’s magic”. What more could you want?’

The installation continued inside, where a life-size Alice in full original costume tumbled through the four-storey atrium at the centre of the store, reproducing the scene in the film when Alice falls into Wonderland.

Lewis Carroll Catalogue

From Selwyn Goodacre

In May 2016 the Antiquarian Book Dealer, Peter Harrington, issued a most remarkable ‘Lewis Carroll’ Catalogue – “The Library of a Bibliophile”. The prices asked may be huge, but there are incredible items within its pages. Some of these are of major bibliographical interest – see my forthcoming report on these to be published in *The Carrollian*.

The catalogue is finely produced with excellent clear photographs. I understand they have also issued 50 (unnumbered) copies of the catalogue in boards.

There are copies of the Appleton “Alice”, and the 1866 “Alice” and a copy of the 55th thousand of “Alice” in white imitation vellum – a presentation copy to Rhoda Liddell. I wonder how many copies of the 55th thousand were thus bound? The catalogue also has the famous copy of the 60th thousand of “Looking-Glass” with Carroll’s MS notes that was sold at the Falletta sale in 2005 for £30,000 – now offered at £55,000.

There is the presentation copy to the Duchess of Albany of the 1886 “Alice” facsimile in the dark blue morocco binding – only two other copies in this binding are known.

There are some fine “Snarks” – in red cloth, in dark green, and one in blue; also a normal first edition in the very rare dust wrapper.

The catalogue also includes a copy of “Aunt Judy’s Magazine” containing the first publication of ‘Bruno’s Revenge’. Copies of the actual original magazine are very rare – Clare Imholtz and Byron Sewell in their bibliography of “Sylvie and Bruno” only identified two copies.

Books

“Alice and the Time Machine: A Tale inspired by Lewis Carroll's *Wonderland* and H. G. Wells' *The Time Machine*” by Victor Fet, illustrations by Byron W Sewell Jnr, Foreword by August A Imholtz, published in paperback by Evertime, September 2016, pp. 156, £11.95.

‘ “Mr Wells has a time machine that allows him to travel backwards into the past.” Alice giggled. “That’s very funny, Mr Darwin. It sounds like something Mr Dodgson might dream up in one of his fairy tales.” ’

Fourteen-year-old Alice, an apprentice to Charles Darwin, meets Mr Wells who arrives from the end of the century to discuss some urgent and disturbing issues related to “Alice’s Adventures” with its alleged author, as well as illustrious scholars of past, present, and future.

‘We should not wait for a future shock-wave that would pollute our time, pushing its fear and madness back against the flow of the River Times! We will try to steer the Ship of History, which seems to be going nowhere.... Time seems to be seriously out of joint—and if we wish to set it right, let us make plans to save the world!’

“The Hunting of the Snark” by Lewis Carroll, Illustrated by Chris Riddell, Macmillan Children’s Books, 2016, pp. 96 £12.99

Chris Riddell, political cartoonist for “The Observer” and the 2015-17 UK Children’s Laureate, goes in search of the Snark: a glorious, meticulously penned exploration that endows every member of the doomed crew of ten with a distinctly characterised personality, while offering a respectful nod in the direction of H. Holiday Esq. This quirky quest bravely goes where none have gone before, resulting in an unexpected and delightfully comic climax!

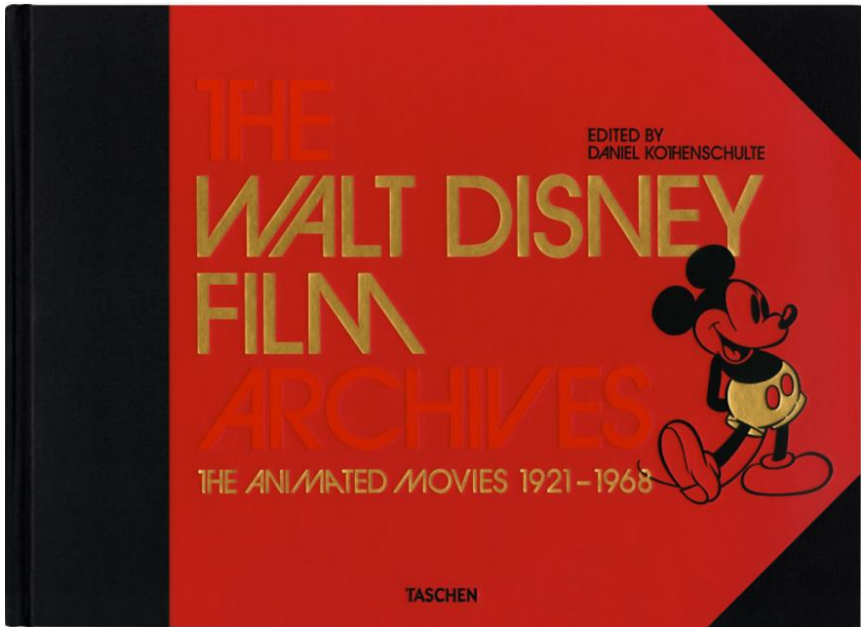
“The Lost Art of Guinness (A Tribute to John Gilroy)” by David Hughes, Privately Printed [2015] pp. 324

This weighty, heavily-illustrated sequel to Hughes’ earlier book, “Gilroy was Good for Guinness” (2013) contains hundreds of Gilroy Guinness images, the vast majority being John Gilroy canvasses for posters and advertisements that never got beyond his initial designs. There are six pen-and-ink drawings based on Tenniel’s “Alice”



illustrations, appearing here in book form for the first time with Guinness being enjoyed by the Tweedles, the Lion and the Unicorn, the White Rabbit, and the Hatter & Co, and substituting for Alice’s famous ‘Drink Me’ bottle. At £60, plus postage, this is an expensive treat for Carrollians (unless they are interested in advertising art and/or Guinness drinkers); enquiries to David Hughes: phim.finch@btinternet.com

In November, Taschen publish the latest addition to their acclaimed 'Archive' series:
"The Walt Disney Film Archives. The Animated Movies 1921–1968"



You'll need a healthy bank balance to buy it (at £135) and you'll need to be pretty fit to lift this hefty 624-page tome, but if you can manage both those things, you'll find a lavishly illustrated essay by Brian Sibley on Disney's 1951 animated feature, "Alice in Wonderland".

Charity Update

From "The Oxford Mail", 24 May 2016:

'Children at Oxfordshire Hospital School had a very important date yesterday when the White Rabbit visited to deliver books and other goodies. The event was organised following a donation to reading charity Readathon from The Lewis Carroll Society.

'It meant the White Rabbit was able to hop across wards and into the hospital school to hand out Alice in Wonderland-related gifts donated by the Society to mark the 150th anniversary of the children's classic.

'The school is part of the John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford, which was one of the first hospitals to pilot Readathon's bookcases and storytellers in 2010.'

You can discover more about Readwell at: www.readwell.org.uk and can send a cheque made payable to 'Readwell – LCS' to:

Old Chilmington, Chilmington Green, Great Chart, Ashford, Kent. TN23 3DP

Thank you!

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